

REMARKS

Applicants have canceled claim 1 and amended claim 2 to appear in independent form; as a result, claim 2, and claims 3 and 4 which are dependent thereupon, will not have been amended to bring them into compliance with any statutory requirement for patentability, and the full scope of equivalents will be available to claims 2-4 without prosecution history estoppel. Applicants have also amended claims 5 and 7-9 to correct their dependencies, and amended claims 10, 11 and 16 to reflect the invention as disclosed.

Claims 2-4 and 11 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. This objection is overcome because claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form and claim 10, upon which claim 11 depends, has been amended to include the feature of claim 2.

Claims 1, 5 and 12-20 have been rejected under 35 USC 102 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,613,782 (Mori). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been canceled, and claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form. Claims 3-9 now depend from claim 2. The amendment of claim 7, which adds the feature that the spring member applies a force to the driving unit in a direction parallel to the contact surface, finds support in, for example, FIG. 14 and the related descriptions on page 16, line 23- page 17, line 6 of the specification. Claim 10 as amended includes the feature of claim 2 that one of the two regulating members faces the base member at the prescribed distance that approximately equals or exceeds an amplitude of oscillation of the driving unit. The feature of claim 10 that one of the two regulating members is placed at the prescribed distance from the base member and another of the two maintains the driving unit at the upstream position finds support in, for example, FIG. 11(b) and related description on page 14, line 23 - page 15, line 5. The left regulating member 50' maintains the driving unit 10 at the upstream position, and the right regulating member 50 is kept away from the oscillating unit 10 not to hinder the oscillation. Furthermore, claim 16 as amended includes the feature of claim 2.

Accordingly, the pending claims in this application are patentable over Mori. Thus, the rejection of these claims should be withdrawn.

In light of the above, a Notice of Allowance is solicited.

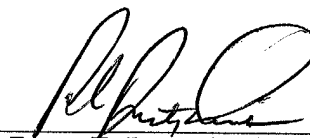
Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by this amendment, captioned "**Version marked to show changes made**".

In the event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952**, referencing Docket No. 325772025600.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION MARKED TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Amend claims 2, 5, 7-11 and 16 as follows:

2. (Amended) A driving apparatus [according to claim 1] comprising:

a driving unit having a plurality of displacement elements;

a synthesizing member connected to a tip end of each of the plurality of displacement elements, the synthesizing member being in pressure contact with a driven member;

a base member supporting base ends of the plurality of displacement elements;

a spring member attached to the base member biasing the synthesizing member onto the driven member;

a drive signal output unit outputting drive signals to each of the plurality of displacement elements causing the synthesizing member to perform a specific motion, the driven member being driven in a prescribed direction by the synthesizing member performing the specific motion; and

a regulating member regulating a displacement of the driving unit, the regulating member facing the base member opposite from the driven member at a prescribed distance from the base member,

wherein the prescribed distance approximately equals or exceeds an amplitude of oscillation of the driving unit caused by a displacement of the plurality of displacement elements.

5. (Amended) A driving apparatus according to claim [1] 2, wherein the specific motion is reciprocating.

7. (Amended) A driving apparatus according to claim [1] 4, wherein the spring member applies a force to the driving unit in a direction [perpendicular] parallel to [a] the contact surface of the synthesizing member and driven member[, and the regulating member maintains the driving unit at an upstream position relative to the prescribed direction of driving].

8. (Amended) A driving apparatus according to claim [1] 2, wherein the plurality of displacement elements have a truss type structure.

9. (Amended) A driving apparatus according to claim [1] 2, wherein the plurality of displacement elements are piezoelectric elements made from PZT.

10. (Amended) A driving apparatus comprising:

a driving unit having a plurality of displacement elements;

a synthesizing member connected to a tip end of each of the plurality of displacement elements, the synthesizing member being in pressure contact with a driven member;

a base member supporting base ends of the plurality of displacement elements;

a spring member attached to the base member biasing the synthesizing member onto the driven member;

a drive signal output unit outputting drive signals to each of the plurality of displacement elements causing the synthesizing member to perform a specific motion, the driven member being driven in a prescribed direction by the synthesizing member performing the specific motion; [and]

a first regulating member regulating a displacement of said driving unit, the first regulating member being located at a position facing the base member opposite from the driven member, the spring member applying a force to the driving unit in a direction perpendicular to a contact surface of the synthesizing member and driven member, and the regulating member maintaining the driving unit at an upstream position relative to the direction of driving; and

a second regulating member regulating a displacement of the driving unit, the second regulating member facing the base member opposite from the driven member at a prescribed distance from the base member,

wherein the prescribed distance of the second regulating member approximately equals or exceeds an amplitude of oscillation of the driving unit caused by a displacement of the plurality of displacement elements.

11. (Amended) A driving apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the first regulating member further comprises a support member rotatably supporting the driving unit and acting as a fulcrum.

16. (Amended) A method for driving a driven member using a driving unit having a plurality of displacement elements, a synthesizing member connected to a tip end of each of the plurality of displacement elements, a regulating member regulating a displacement of the driving unit and a base member supporting base ends of the plurality of displacement elements, the method comprising:

 biasing the synthesizing member into contact with the driven member;

 outputting drive signals to each of the plurality of displacement elements;

 moving the synthesizing member in a specific motion;

 driving the driven member in a prescribed direction based on the specific motion performed by the synthesizing member; and

 [regulating a displacement of the driving unit] placing the regulating member to face the base member opposite from the driven member at a prescribed distance from the base member, the prescribed distance being approximately equal to or greater than an amplitude of oscillation of the driving unit caused by a displacement of the plurality of displacement elements.